

**Group Key West  
Y2K Business Continuity Contingency Plan Exercise  
Conducted 12 September 1999**

## **Executive Summary**

United States Coast Guard (USCG) Group Key West exercised the unit's Business Continuity and Contingency Plan (BCCP) on September 12, 1999 for a period of 2 hours. The exercise tested the loss of important items needed to carry out all Coast Guard missions in Group Key West's Area of Responsibility (AOR). The exercise involved the coordinated efforts of Group personnel, a patrol boat (WPB), and a medium endurance cutter (WMEC).

The exercise demonstrated that the Group will be able to carry out all Coast Guard missions as normal despite the threat of Y2K related failures. Because of the Group's remote location and the frequent hurricanes that visit the area, Group Key West is experienced in facing threats similar to those posed by Y2K. As an example, Hurricane George struck one year ago and caused the Group to operate on emergency generators for a period of 6 days. Group Key West will use the hurricane checklist and other planning tools to prepare for Y2K. The hurricane checklist includes such items as ensuring 100% fuel capacity in vans, tanks, and generators and conducting equipment checks prior to the anticipated event.

## **Background**

Group Key West is responsible for 750 miles of coastline and 55,000 square miles of water in the Florida Straits and the Gulf of Mexico. In order to ensure continued operations in these areas, Group Key West has developed a BCCP to identify specific contingency plans and procedures that can be implemented in the event of Y2K related failures and other emergencies. The plan contains strategies to mitigate risks and documents procedures and assignments to enable emergency response while continuing normal operations. The BCCP addresses all aspects of Group operations including communication with unit personnel, with other USCG units, and with other port stakeholders; back-up communications equipment such as VHF-FM radios; back-up power sources for facilities and equipment such as batteries and emergency generators; staffing; supply and logistics; and personal services such as food and berthing for watchstanders.

The primary purpose of the plan is to ensure readiness for Y2K critical dates; however, the planning provides an excellent framework to address any emergency situation.

## **Step 1 – Establish Major Objectives**

The major objective for the exercise was to test critical aspects of the South Florida Y2K Plan. Additional objectives included:

- ***Ensure Normal Operations by Units*** – The exercise was designed to ensure that stations, patrol boats, and other units operating under the direction of Group Operations will be able to perform all normal tasks, even if faced with Y2K related problems.

- **Ensure Group Support of Units** – The exercise was designed to ensure that Group will be able to support all units and tenants in the event of Y2K related problems.
- **Confirm Communications Capabilities** – The exercise was designed to ensure that communications will be maintained between Key West and all other important stations necessary to carry out the USCG mission.

## Step 2 – Identify Exercise Participants

Participants are listed in the table below. There were no vessels or commercial port stakeholders involved in the exercise.

Participant Type	Participant
State/Local Government	
	U.S. Navy High Voltage Team (NAS Key West)
United States Coast Guard	
	Group Key West
	USCGC Padre, (110' Patrol Boat)
	USCGC Decisive (210' Medium Endurance Cutter)

Table 1 – Key West Exercise Participants

## Step 3 – Develop Exercise Scenario(s)

The Group Key West exercise consisted of the following scenario:

- **Power Failure** – This scenario simulated a loss of power to the Group. The main breaker on the Navy property that feeds USCG property was opened to effect the power loss. The purpose of the simulation was to ensure that all personnel were aware of the equipment that would be lost in the event of a Y2K power failure and to identify procedures to prepare for that possibility.
- **Communications Failure** – This scenario simulated loss of landline down to the Florida Keys making normal phones and cell phones inoperable. This was easily done by preventing the Group Operations watchstanders from using these items for normal operations. The purpose of the simulation was to ensure that the back-up communications available to units within District 7 will be operable in the event of a Y2K communications failure. The exercise was conducted with the concept of using patrol boats along the coast to receive, send, and relay HF transmissions.

## Step 4 – Conduct Exercise Activities

This section presents the primary Group Key West exercise activities.

- **Power Failure**
  - The main breaker was opened and power was lost throughout the entire base.

- Within 8 seconds, emergency diesel generators came on line and provided power to all vital areas of the base. These areas included the Group Operations Center, Galley, Unaccompanied Enlisted Personnel Housing, and the Group Engineering Building.
  - All Group units shifted to generator power located on ships. Fuel was easily ordered from large fuel tanks adjacent to the Group via normal communications or by personal message.
  - Generators can supply power to the Group as long as there is fuel. A full tank of fuel will provide for at least two weeks of operation.
- ***Communications Failure***
    - Watchstanders were restricted from using normal communications and used backup communications equipment.
    - The USCGC Padre, located at the pier, successfully communicated with the USCGC Decisive over a considerable distance via HF voice radio. If normal communications were lost, this would be a successful alternative method.
    - Any communication within the local area can be conducted by word of mouth or hand delivered messages. This is easily done since Key West is an island only 2 miles by 4 miles in diameter and most people use bikes to get back and forth to their destinations.

## Step 5 – Conduct Post Exercise Analysis

The results of the post exercise analysis are provided in the table below.

No.	Observation/Explanation	Lesson Learned	Recommended Action
1	In the event of a power loss, numerous diesel generators at Group come on line providing adequate power to carry out CG missions.	Generators do not contain timing devices and will provide power as long as fuel is supplied. Fuel is supplied by the U.S. Navy Fuel Farm adjacent to the Group.	Ensure that preventive maintenance has been conducted on each generator and that fuel tanks are filled to 100% capacity prior to Y2K.
2	Communications between afloat assets was effective.	During the simulated loss, the pierside unit was able to communicate with underway units over considerable distance via HF voice.	Utilize afloat assets to support backup communications in addition to hand delivered messages within the local area.

Table 2 – Key West Exercise Results

**For More Information*****Contact the USCG Representatives***

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***Or, Visit the Web Sites***

Marine Safety Office: <http://www.uscg.mil/d7/units/grukeywest/>